

Amendments to the Specification:

On page 6, lines 4 and 5, please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the improved strap tensioner showing the tension lever moved in the closed position.

On page 10, lines 14-23, please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

During operation, the non-working end 91 of the ~~fixed~~-strap 90 is securely attached around the rear strut 22 on the rigid base 12. The brake lever 65 is rotated forward so that the opposite end 92 of the same strap 90 or one end of a second strap (not shown) may be inserted into the narrow space formed between the second cam surface 75 and the front flange member 20. The strap 90 is then further extended through the space until it may be engaged by the tension lever 30 and the intermediate member 45. The tension lever 30 is rotated in a forward direction to advance the strap 30 through the rigid base 12. If the tension lever 30 is rotated in a forward direction to press against the brake lever ~~60~~ 65, the brake lever ~~60~~ 65 may be slightly rotated in a forward direction to allow the strap 90 to advance more freely in the rigid base 12.

On page 11, lines 1-7, please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

Because the brake lever 65 binds the strap 90 in one direction and is biased in the closed position, the strap ~~30~~ 90 is temporarily held by the tensioner 10 has the user easily operates the tension lever 30 to pull the strap 90 through the rigid base 12. Because the rotation of the tension lever 30 is opposite the direction of the strap 90 through the rigid base

1 12, the user is able to exert greater force of the strap ~~30~~ 90. Because the tension lever 30 is
2 biased to the disengaged position, the strap 90 may be easily loosened by rotating the brake
3 ~~member~~ lever 65 in a forward direction.

4 On page 11, lines 8-12, please replace the paragraph with the following amended
5 paragraph:

6 In summary, the improved strap tensioner 10 allows the user to easily tighten a strap
7 90 by simply moving the tension lever 30 back and forth over the rigid base 12. Because the
8 brake lever 65 temporarily holds the strap 90 and prevents it from slipping out of the rigid
9 base 12, and because the tension lever 30 is rotated in a direction opposite the direction of the
10 strap ~~30~~ 90 when tightened, greater tension may be applied to the strap 90.